

BY JAMES REED.

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On and after Monday May 10, 1858.

CLEVELAND AND ERIE R. ROAD.

Leaving Ashtabula—GOING EAST.

Leaving Ashtabula—GOING WEST.

Written for the Telegraph.

LIFE LESSONS.

Through weary years I have learned child's lessons.

Through I have passed my aching heart, and fancied hope was dead.

That every day I should thank, and slumbering with the dead.

Yet, I cannot help myself, for my heart's a wayward thing.

And like the gay-tongued wild-lily, I give over on the wing.

That I have learned that friends may change—and break the bond.

That those we love the dearest, are unkind to betray;

That I have met the chilling look, when years' old heart has been laid.

Some kindly teaching, or look of love for me;

Yet from a hopeful heart like mine, sorrow, with love, and awe,

As well as the shining snow-flakes, before the blast of day.

That I have heard old, careless words, poured freely in my ear,

When caught, but friendship's sweetest tones, I ever dream to hear.

And that in bitterness of soul, I've turned away,

And in the hour of grief, the look of pain, the heart's eye true;

Yet I've learned to pity selfishness, wherever the truth is given.

To them the humblest earthly love, a meaning must be given.

To those whose hearts have been laid waste, may be consoled to weep.

That shades of gloom enshroud the heart, threatening to bring down the soul.

While sunlight's tongue oppresses the soul, which neither you nor I.

Had ever dreamed to a comely crown, in brighter days gone by.

turning from these, we may go up together to the serene and secret mountain top, and there pause, and there unite in the reverent exclamation, and in the exultant prayer, "How beautiful at last are thy tabernacles!"

What people at last is like unto the! Peace be within thy palaces, and joy within thy gates! The high places are thine, and there shalt thou stand proudly, and innocently, and securely."

Happy if such a day shall not be decried by our service! Happy if for us that descending sun shall look out on a more loving, more elevated, more united selves! These no less, no narrower, be the aims of our celebration. These always were the true aims of this celebration. In its origin, a recital or defence of the grounds and principles of the Revolution, now demanding and permitting no defence, all taken for granted, and all had by heart; then sometimes wasted in a parade of vain glory, cheap and vulgar; sometimes profaned by the attack and repulse of partisan and local rhetoricians; its great work, its distinctive character, and its chief lessons remain and vindicate themselves, and will do so while the eye of the fighting or the dying shall yet read on the stainless camp folds, the superscription blazing all in light, "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

I have wished, therefore, that it was my duty, in doing myself the honor to take in this act, to give some direction to your thought and feelings, and suited at once to the nation's holiday, and seasonable and useful in itself. How difficult this may be, I know. To try, however, to do anything, is easy, and it is American also. Your candor will make it doubly easy, and to your candor I commit myself.

The birthday of a nation, old or young, and certainly if young, is a time to think of the means of keeping alive the nation. I do not mean to say, however, because I do not believe that there is but the way to this, the direct and the indirect. For at last it is the spirit of the day, we would cherish. It is our great annual national love-feast which we keep; and if we rise from it with hearts larger, beefing fuller, with feeling purer and warmer for America, which signifies it how frugally or how richly or how it was spent, or whether it was a strain on the organ, the trumpet tones of the declaration, the prayer of the good man, the sympathy of the hour, or what it was which wrought to that end?

I do not, therefore, say that such an anniversary is not a time for thanksgiving to God, for gratitude to men, the living and the dead, for tears and thoughts too deep for tears, for eulogy, for exaltation, for all the memories and for all the contrasts which soften and lift up the general mind. I do not say, for example, that to dwell on that one image of Progress which is our history; that image so grand, so dazzling, so con-

spiring; that stream now flowing so far and swelling into so immense a flood, but which burst out a small, choked, uncertain spring from the ground at first; that transition from the Rock at Plymouth, to the fortified peninsula at Jamestown, to this America, which lays a hand on both the oceans,—from that heroic yet feeble folk whose allowance to a man by the day was five kernels of corn, for three months no corn, or a piece of fish, or a moulded remainder of a biscuit, or a limb of a wild bird—to whom a drouth in Spring was a fear and a judgment, and a call for humiliation before God, or a war cry broke the innocent sleep, or startled the brave watching,—from that handful, and that want, to these millions, whose area is a continent, whose harvest might load the board of famishing nations, for whom a world in arms has no terror; whose two contrasted religions, the Providences the dominant race, sober, earnest, constructive, changed, but not degenerate here, the influx of other races, assimilating, eloquent and brave, the fusion of all into a new one; the sweet simulations of liberty, the removal by the whole width of oceans from the establishments of Europe, shaken, tyrannical or burdened, the heartfelt virgin-world, the universal progress of reason and art, universal as civilization, the aspect of revolutions on the human mind, the expansion of discovery and trade, the developing sentiment of independence, the useful baptism of wars, the brave men, the wise men, the Constitution, the Union, the national life and the feeling of union which have grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength—I do not say that meditations such as these might not, or deepen the lesson of the day. All these things, so holy and beautiful, all things American, may afford certainly the means to keep America alive. That vast panorama unrolled by our general history, or unrolling; that energy, so just, so fervent, so splendidly approved; that electric, reasonable memory of WASHINGTON; that purchase and that dedication of the dwelling and the tomb, the work of woman; that record of his generals; that visit the battle fields; that reverent wiping away of dust great wars; that dream of his past, present and future; every ship built on lake or ocean; every treaty concluded; every acre of territory annexed; every cannon cast; every machine invented; every mile of new railroad and telegraph undertaken; every dollar added to the aggregate of national or individual wealth;—these all, subjects of thought, as motives to pride and care, as teachers of wisdom, as agencies for profitable good, may work, may inspire that earthly immortality of love and glory for which this celebration was ordained.

My way, however, shall be less ambitious and less indirect. Think, then, for a moment on American nationality itself; the outward national life, and the inward national sentiment; think on this; its nature, and some of its conditions and some of its duties—I would say, too, some of its dangers—but there shall be no expression of evil even in this stage of the discourse, and to-day at least the word is safety, or hope.

To know the nature of American nationality, examine it first by contrast and then examine it in itself.

In some of the elemental characteristics of political opinion the American people are one. These they can no more renounce for substance than the highest summit of the White Hills, than the peak of the Alleghenies, than the Rocky Mountains can bow and cast themselves into the sea.

Through all their history, from the dawn of the colonial life to the brightness of this rising, they have spoken these words, they have written them, they have acted them; they have run over with them. In all stages, in all agonies, through all reports, good and evil—some learning from the golden times of ancient and medieval freedom, Greece and Italy and Geneva, from ARISTOTEL, from CICERO, and BOETIUS, and MACHIAVEL, and CALVIN; or later, from HARRINGTON and SINNEY and ROUSSEAU; some learning, all reinforcing it directly from nature and nature's God; every other man, that every man was equal to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and a conscience unfettered, and that the people were the source of power, and that the good of the people was the political object of society itself. This creed, so grand, so broad—in its general and duly qualified, so true—planted the colonies, led them through the desert and the sea of anti-revolutionary life, rallied them altogether to resist the attacks of a king and a minister, sharpened and pointed the bayonets of all their battles, burst forth from a million lips, beamed in a million eyes, burned in a million bosoms sounded out in their revolutionary eloquence of fire, and in the Declaration awoke the dearest words of ORIS, HENRY and ADAMS, was graven forever on the general mind by the pen of JAMES OTIS and FAYNE, as by a steel point on a great rock, unslighted, survived the excitement, moved and the necessities of order, penetrated and tinged all our constitutional composition and policy and all our party organizations and nomenclature, and stands to-day radiant, defiant, jocund, tip-toe, on the summit of our greatness, one authoritative and louder proclamation to humanity by Freedom, the guardian and the avenger.

But in some traits of our politics we are not one. In some traits we differ from one another, and we change from ourselves. You may say these are subordinate, executive, instrumental traits. Let us not cavil about names, but find the essence of things. Our object is to know the nature of American nationality, and we are attempting to do so, first, by contrasting it with its antagonisms.

There are two great existences, then, in our civil life which have this in common, though they have nothing else in common, that they may come in conflict with the nationality which I describe: one of them constant in its operation, constitutional, healthful, auxiliary, even; the other rare, illegitimate, abnormal, terrible; one of them a force under law; the other a violence and a phenomenon above law and against law. It is first the capital peculiarity of our system, now a common-place in our politics, that the affections which we give to country, we give to a divided object, the States in which we live and the Union by which we are consoled. We serve two masters. Our hearts own two loves. We live in two countries at once, and are commanded to be capacious of both.

How easy it is to respond to these duties in theory, how helpfully and independently they are in theory, how in this respect our system's difference makes our system's peace, and from these blended colors, and this action and counteraction, how marvelous a beauty and how grand a harmony we draw out, you all know. Practically you know, too, the adjustment has not been quite so simple. How the Constitution attempts it is plain enough. There it is: *Litena scripta manet*, and heaven and earth shall pass before one jot or tittle of that Scripture shall fall of fulfillment. So we all say, and yet how men have divided on it, how they divided in the great convention itself, and in the very presence of glory; how it has created parties, lost and given power, bestowed great reputations, and taken them away, and colored and shaken the universal course of our public life. But have you ever considered that in the nature of things this must be so? Have you ever considered that it was a federal system we had to adopt, and that in such a system a conflict of head and member is in some form and to some extent a result of course? There the States were when we became a nation. There they had been for one hundred and fifty years; for one hundred and seventy years. Some power, it was agreed on all hands, we must delegate to the new government. Of some thunder, some beams, some insignia, some means of kindling pride, winning gratitude, attracting honor, luring friends, all men knew they must be bestowed, and they were so. But when this was done, and there were the States still. In the scheme of compromise itself, they remained a component part, indestructible. In the theories of all publicists and all specialists they were retained, and they were valued for it, to hinder and disarm that centralization which had been found to be the danger and the weakness of federal liberty. And then when you bear in mind that they are sovereign, *quasi*, but sovereignly intact; that one of the most direct and transcendent prerogatives of sovereignty, the prerogative to take life and liberty for crime, is theirs without dispute; that in the theories of some schools they may claim to be, and may, and that any one of them may, secede from the compact when by their corporate judgment they deem it to be broken fundamentally by the others, and that from such a judgment there is no appeal to a common peaceful umpire; that in the theories of some schools they may call out their young men and their old men under the pains of death to defy the sword-point of the Federal Army; that they can pour around even the gallows and the tomb of him who died for treason to the Union, honor, opinion, tears, and thus sustain the last untimely hour, and soothe the disembodied complaining shade; that every one, by name, by lineage, by boundary, by jurisdiction, is distinct from every other, and every one from the nation; that within their irrevocable borders lie our farms, our homes, our meeting-houses, our graves; that their laws, their courts, their militia, their police, to vast an extent protect our persons from violence and our houses from plunder; that their harvests ripen our harvests; their schools form our

children's mental and moral nature; their charities or their taxes feed our poor; their hospitals care or shelter our insane; their image, their opinions, their literature, their science, a monument, an atmosphere. When you consider this, you feel how practical and how inevitable is that antagonism of a single national life, and how true it is that we buy all our blessings at a price.

But there is another antagonism to such a national life, less constant, less legitimate, less compensated, more terrible, to which I must refer—not for reprobation, not for warning, not even for grief, but that we may know by contrast, nationality itself—and that is, the element of sections. This, too, is old, older than the States, older than the colonies, older as the churches that planted them, older as Jamestown, old as Plymouth. A thousand forms disguise and express it, and in all of them it is hideous. *Candidum ne agnoscit hoc Romanus cetero.* Black or white, as you are Americans, break it, shun it. Springing from many causes and fed by many stimulants, springing from that diversity of climate, business, institutions, accomplishment and morality, which comes of our greatness, and compels and should constitute our order and our agreement, but which only makes their difficulty and their merit; from that self-love and self-preference which are their own standard, exclusive, intolerant, and censorious, of what is wise and holy; from the fear of ignorance, the jealousy of ignorance, the narrowness of ignorance; from incapacity to abstract, combine and grasp a complex and various object, and thus rise to the dignity of concession and forbearance and compromise; from the frame of our civil polity, the necessities of our public life and the nature of our ambition, which forces all men not great men,—the minister in his parish, the politician on the stump on election day, the editor of the party newspaper—to take his rise or his patronage from intense local opinion, and therefore to do his best to create or reinforce it; from our federal Government; from our good traits, bad traits, and foolish traits; from that vain and vulgar hankering for European reputation and respect, and our European opinion, which forgets that our many know Aristophanes, and Geography, and the Common Unity, and the religious influences, and the smaller morals of life and all the sounding pretensions of philanthropy, and yet not know America; from that philosophy, falsely so-called, which boasts empty of progress, resuscitates traditions, denies God and worships itself; from an arrogant and flashy literature which mistakes a new phrase for a new thought, and old nonsense for new truth, and is glad to exchange for the fame of drawing-rooms and parlor windows, and the side-light of a car in motion, the approval of time and the world; from philanthropy which is short-sighted, impatient and spasmodic, and cannot be made to appreciate that its grandest and most earnest agent in its eye whose life is eternity, and whose periods are ages, is a nation and a sober public opinion, and a safe and silent advancement, reforming by time; from that spirit which would rule or ruin, and would reign in hell rather than serve in heaven; springing from these causes and stimulated thus, there is an element of regions antagonistic to nationality. Always, I have said, there was one; always there will be. It lifted its shriek sometimes even above the silver claron tones that called millions to unite for independence. It resisted the nomination of WASHINGTON to command our armies; made his new levies hate one another; assisted the caprices of ORIS and CONWAY; mocked his retreats and threw its damp passing cloud for a moment over his exceeding glory; opposed the adoption of any Constitution, and perverted by construction and deconstruction as a covenant with hell the actual Constitution when it was adopted; brought into our vocabulary and discussions the hateful and ill-omened words North and South, Atlantic and Western; which the grave warnings of the farewell address exposed and rebuke; transformed the floor of Congress into a battle-field of contending local policy; converted its conventions at Abbeville and Hartford; rent assuasive conferences and synods; turned stately assemblies of grave clergymen and grave laymen into shows of gladiators or of the beasts of gladiators, checked the holy effort of missions, and set back the shadow of the millennium of a certain amelioration and ultimate probable emancipation, many degrees. Some might say if culminated later in an enterprise even more daring still; but others might deny it. The ashes upon that fire are not yet cold, and we will not tread upon them. But all will unite in prayer to Almighty God that we may never see, nor our children, nor their children to the thousandth generation, may ever see it culminated in a geographical party banded to elect a geographical President, and inaugurate a geographical policy.

But now by the side of this and all antagonisms, higher than they, stronger than they, there rises colossal the blue sweet spirit of nationality, the nationality of America! See there the pillar of fire which God has kindled and lifted and moved for our homes and our ages. Gaze on that, worship that, worship the highest in that. Between that light and our eye a cloud for a time may seem to gather; chariots, armed men on foot, the troops of kings may march on us, and our fear may make us for a moment turn from it; a sea may spread before us, and waves seem to hedge us up; dark idolatries may alienate some hearts for a season from that worship; revolt, rebellion, may break out in the camp, and the waters of our springs may run bitter to the taste and mock it; between us and that Canaan a great river may seem to be rolling; but beneath that high guidance our way is onward, ever onward; those waters shall part, and stand on either hand in heaps; that idolatry shall repent; that rebellion shall be crushed; that stream shall be sweetened; that overflowing river shall be passed on foot, dry-shod in harvest time; and from that promised land of flocks, fields, tents, mountains, coasts and ships, from North and South, and East and West, there shall swell one cry yet, of victory, peace and thanksgiving!

But we were seeking the nature of the spirit of nationality, and we pass in this inquiry from contrast to analysis. You may call it, subjectively regarded, as a mode of contemplating the nation in its essence, and so far it is an intellectual conception; and you may call it a feeling to love the nation thus contemplated, and so far it is an emotion. In the intellectual exercise it contemplates the nation as it is one, and as it is distinguished from all other nations, and in the emotional exercise it loves it and is proud of it as thus it is contemplated. This you may call its ultimate analysis. But how much more is included in it! How much flows from it! How cold and inadequate is such a description if we leave it there! Think of it first as a state of consciousness, as a spring of feeling, as a motive to exertion, as a blessing your country, and as reaching on you. Think of it as it fills your mind and quickens your heart, and as it fills the mind and quickens the heart of millions around you, born, unborn, dead, living although dead. Instantly, under such an influence, you ascend above the smoke and stir of this small local strife; you tread upon the high places of earth and of history; you think and feel as an American for America; her power, her resources, her consideration her honor, are yours; your competitors, like hers, are kings; your home, like hers, is the world; your path, like hers, is on the highway of empires; your charge, her charge is of generations and ages; your record, her record, is of treaties, battles, voyages, beneath all the constellations; her image, one, immortal, golden, rises on your eye as our western star, ever rising on the traveler from this home; no lowering cloud, no angry river, no lingering spring, no broken crevasse, no inundated city or plantation, no tracts of sand and burning, on that surface, but all kindred rays, the image, harbingers and promise of hope and brighter day!

Think of it next as an active virtue. Is not all history a recital of the achievements of nationality, and an exponent of its historical and imperial nature? Even under systems far less perfect, and influences far less auspicious than ours, has it not lifted itself up for a time above all things meaner, vindicating itself by action, by the sublimity of a brave daring, successful or unsuccessful, by the sublimity of a working hope! How loose, for example, and how perfidious was that union of the States of Greece in all times! How distinct were the nations of Attica, of Laconia,